



Expedition Air

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Greene takes command of 16th EOG

By Capt. Lisa Neidinger
16th AEW Public Affairs

Col. Mike Greene took command of the 16th Expeditionary Operations Group Oct. 25 in an outdoor ceremony at Le Tube Air Base at Istres, France.

During the ceremony, Col. Terry New, 16th Air Expeditionary Wing commander, stressed the significance of the event. "The change of command ceremony is a very important day in the careers of two Air Force officers who have been singled out as having the attributes necessary to be entrusted with valuable AF resources, including our most valuable resource, the men and women who make up our Expeditionary Air Force."

In his comments to the airmen and guests present, Greene said, "I look forward to working with each and every one of you. I promise to do the best I can do."

Greene comes to the 16th EOG from Alabama where he is the director of operations for the Alabama Air National Guard in Montgomery.

Greene replaces Col. Ronald Albers, who returns to Ohio Air National Guard's 121st Air Refueling Wing.



Photo by 1st Lt. Steven Bury

Col. Terry New, 16th Air Expeditionary Wing commander, passes the unit guidon to Col. Mike Greene, 16th Expeditionary Operations Group commander Oct. 25, at Le Tube Air Base in Istres, France, while 1st Sgt. Henry Hepner looks on.

Skinner assumes command of 16th ESS

By Senior Airman Catharine Schmidt
16th AEW Public Affairs

Maj. Nancy F. Skinner assumed command of the 16th Expeditionary Support Squadron Oct. 1 at Rhein-Main Air Base, Germany.

Col. Terry L. New, 16th AEW commander, officiated the ceremony, welcoming Skinner, and expressing his thanks to 16th ESS members.

"Each one of you is a vital

member of the team," New said. "I thank you for your service, the country thanks you and the Air Force thanks you."

In her words to the guests present, Skinner said she expects everyone to do their best to get the job done, and gave her word she would do her job right and give everyone her best as well.

Skinner stressed she was honored to be selected for the position.

"People here are motivated and really know their jobs," said Skinner.

"This makes it easier for me. While I'm here, I hope to continue the quality training to prepare those going forward. Knowledge is power."

Skinner comes to the 16th from the Air Force's Aerospace Expeditionary Force Center, Langley Air Force Base, Va., as an Individual Mobilization Augmentee specializing in Supply/Fuels.

Skinner replaces Maj. David W. Jones who has returned to Headquarters, Air Combat Command at Langley AFB, Va., as the Plans and Procedures Branch chief.

Airmen bring supplies, compassion to local refugee center

By Senior Airman Catharine Schmidt
16th AEW Public Affairs

TUZLA AIR BASE, Bosnia—In the summer of 1995, an estimated 8,000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys were murdered after the town of Srebrenica fell to Bosnian Serb forces, causing remaining women, children and old men from the town to become displaced inside Bosnia.

In 1996, the Swiss Red Cross established the Simin Han's Refugee Center in Tuzla, Bosnia, to house almost 120 of the women and children who had lost fathers, husbands and sons to the 1995 tragedy. Now members deployed to Tuzla Air Base, Bosnia, have the chance to visit the center, bringing supplies and compassion. Recently, eight airmen assigned to the 401st Expeditionary Air Base Group went to visit the women and children there to see their lifestyle where they were living. They brought with them recreational equipment, clothing and personal hygiene items.

"We brought numerous items to the refugee center, ranging from your basic toiletries of soap, toothpaste, mouthwash, to clothing and shoes," said Staff Sgt. Angela Brown, 401st EABG Services. "The majority of the items were women's necessities." Among the boxes of clothes from the

401st EABG were several donations from a Winter Clothing drive held at Vance Air Force Base, Okla.

As well as bearing supplies for the women and children, the airmen were also able to see the living conditions they had been living in for years.

"Entire families were living in a 15 by 15 foot room," said Master Sgt. Joseph Lovato, 401st Unit Advisory Council president. "Their sole source of heat was wood stoves. They shared two toilets among 40 people. They are living in homes with leaking roofs, no decorations, insufficient clothing and supplies.

"Although I have seen worse living conditions, I couldn't believe that people were living in these kind of conditions here in Europe," said Lovato. "There is no reason for people here to be this far behind in progress. This area has been populated since 200BC! Why isn't there a reliable infrastructure?"

Staff Sgt. Joseph Musick, 401st EABG information manager, agreed the living conditions weren't the best. "Though the conditions were below standards, it appeared to me the basics for everyday living were being provided to the children," he said. "It still saddened me to see these people have been forced to live in these conditions."

"In one sense, it was humbling and made me feel guilty for taking for granted all the little comforts I have," said Lovato. "On another, I was angry. These people don't have to live this way. If the societies could put aside their differences and learn to co-exist they could devote more energy toward improving their living conditions instead of fighting."

"I didn't have the opportunity to see the living conditions inside of their



Courtesy Photos

A woman living at the Simin Han Refugee Center in Bosnia, looks out her window. Almost 120 women and children were housed here after losing husbands, fathers and sons during the fall of Srebrenica to Bosnia Serb forces in 1995.

homes," said Brown. "Outside looking in, it reminded me of the stateside 'Projects' or 'Section 8' areas. I didn't feel different than what I would in my country. I know the women and young adults should take advantage of becoming more self-reliant. As an American, I'm aware that I am offered more benefits but they have benefits too."

Along with the living conditions, the airmen who visited the center were also awed by the children they encountered.

"I saw a little girl, probably about 8 or 9 years old. I watched her with curiosity as she collected leftovers from all the other children's lunches (sandwiches)," said Lovato. "She grouped together the meat, bread and trash and put them in a bucket. When she finished she fed the meat pieces to two mangy looking skinny dogs, then big chunks of bread to some chickens, then the remaining crumbs were spread out for the wild birds. Even among all this 'helplessness' there was someone who would put forth effort to share what she



Women and children of Simin Han Refugee Center live in 15 by 15 foot rooms with their entire family.

SEE REFUGEE PAGE 3

REFUGEE, FROM PAGE 2

could with some less fortunate. It was refreshing to see compassion in all this sadness."

"I spent most of my time interacting with the children," said Brown. "I have a daughter of my own, and this gave me the opportunity to relate to the younger life again and reflect my joys of life. The children were interested in the weapons and water more than anything. They constantly asked for water. The reason, I do not know. Maybe from the running around they were doing and the fact that we arrived after lunchtime."

"The most surprising thing I noticed was the knowledge of the children," said Brown.

Musick said it was a good experience to know they were trying to help the less fortunate.

"This trip identified that poverty exists in all countries, some worse than others," said Brown. "I am more thankful for what I have received through the glory of God versus me complaining about what I do not have in my possession."

"These people had been through worse conditions before they were moved into the refugee center," said Lovato. "We see these pictures with pity, but the people there now consider themselves so lucky to have that leaky roof over their head. There's a lesson to be learned here. Eighty people, two washing machines and they're happy. At



Members of the 401st EABG at Tuzla Air Base, Bosnia, unload supplies donated to the women and children living at the Simin Han Refugee Center, as the children watch



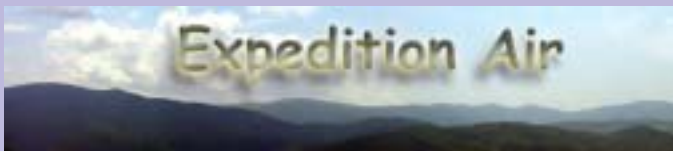
Courtesy Photos

my house there are five people and one machine, and I hear complaints! Some of these people only have one pair of school shoes, and they're happy. I have about seven pairs of shoes and I'd like new running shoes. We should be as happy without material wealth as they are with their basic needs."

The group that went to visit the refugee center was able to see a new standard of living, and gain a new form of respect for those living there. Each person who went took back a new sense of gratitude for their own lifestyles, and a sense of pride knowing they were able to give these women and children some happiness, even if only for a few hours.



Two girls from the Simin Han Refugee Center watch as members of the 401st EABG unload supplies.



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16th EOG works together as 'seamless blend'

By Senior Airman Catharine Schmidt

16th AEW Public Affairs

Each unit of the 16th Air Expeditionary Wing supports the NATO peacekeeping mission in a different but vital way. The 16th Expeditionary Operations Group at Istres, France, does this by providing aerial refueling support for NATO operations in the Balkans, and does this with the full total force concept.

There are two parts of the 16th EOG, which are the 16th Expeditionary Air Base Squadron, and the 622nd Expeditionary Air Refueling Squadron.

"The 16th EABS provides support services while the 622nd EARS consists of the jet aircrews and maintains the flying missions," said Col. Mike Greene, 16th EOG commander.

"We do everything we can to ensure that sorties take place and all flying missions are accomplished," said Lt. Col. Rick Cox, 16th EABS commander.

The 16th EOG gets the mission

complete with not only active duty doing their part, but also with reservists and guardsmen all working side by side.

"What we have here is the true definition of total force," said Cox. "We have active duty here for 90 days, sometimes 120 days; we have guardsmen here for 15, 30, 45 and 90 days; we have reservists here for 15 to 90 days. And you can't tell them apart as to whom they're with. This is a true total force effort over here.

"This is a tremendous benefit to the Air Force. We can all take something from the active duty, the reservists and the guardsmen," said Cox.

Members of the 16th are constantly learning about their active duty, reservist and guard counterparts.

"One active duty member here told me he didn't realize that the guardsmen here were volunteers, and was very surprised about that," said Cox. "And that this guardsman that came here was fully trained and ready to go."

While the mission keeps going, keeping morale up is very important especially while being deployed, and away from loved ones. The first sergeant is there to make sure this happens, through

programs like the recognitions program.

"We have a wonderful recognition program here," said Hepner. "Every month, the group recognizes a 'sharp troop,' who always keeps their uniform looking good, and is a good example for others to follow."

Hepner is also the Military Equal Opportunity representative and Judge Advocate representative doing powers of attorneys as well as notaries, for people who may need those services.

"I also run the Isolated Unit Funds, which is money given each quarter for morale things, such as having a pizza party every Wednesday," said Hepner.

It takes everyone in the group to get the mission complete. From the Communications troops, who have implemented the "giant voice," to the Civil Engineer troops who have ensured the safety of their runway. Everyone plays a vital role in the mission, whether active duty, guard or reserve.

"We're a seamless blend here," said Greene. "And everyone here does their part to get the mission done."

Construction project underway at Istres

By Senior Airman Catharine Schmidt

16th AEW Public Affairs

The 16th Expeditionary Operations Group at Istres, France, is undergoing a construction project to repair the damage done to the taxiway over the last few years.

The KC-135s that operate at Istres have caused damage to the taxiway, involving cracks in the concrete, creating potential for foreign object damage to the aircraft.

"The KC-135s, loaded with fuel, have damaged the parking exit, creating some cracks in the concrete," said Senior Master Sgt. Michael Dishman, 16th EOG Civil Engineer superintendent. "So about four years ago they began this project to repair the

parking ramp."

Funds were allocated and final approval came for the project in August.

"In late September we awarded the bid to local contractors who are scheduled to come out for a kick off meeting in mid-November to start construction," said Dishman. "This will allow us to eliminate a very serious FOD issue we have with the aircraft.

"Many different rotations have put a lot of work into this project, and it's finally coming together," said Dishman. "The Corps of Engineers has done a great job at getting a project bid. Now we're trying to coordinate with the flying units and the contractor to make sure we can still fly the mission while the work is being done. I don't think that will be a big problem. It's just a matter of moving a few aircraft to a differ-

ent parking location."

This will be done in one of two ways. Either moving the aircraft to the other side of the apron, or working with the French to relocate the aircraft to their side of the base.

"We do have the approval of the French for this if it comes down to that need," said Dishman.

"The biggest concern we have is safety, and it's only getting worse," said Dishman. "If Ops Tempo picks up, with more aircraft, we could really have a problem."

The project is spearheaded by the Corps of Engineers, with the 16th EOG being the liaison between them and the contractors to get the project finished.

16th AEW 'Expedition' Warriors - AEF 6 -



Staff Sgt. William Eddy
Position: 16th EOG Telephone
Systems Specialist, Istres
Home Station: Scott AFB, Ill.



Master Sgt. Dennis Barnes
Position: 16th EOG Network
Administrator, Istres
Home Station: Maxwell AFB,
Gunter Annex, Alab.



Staff Sgt. Marc Coriolan
Position: 16th EOG Interpreter,
Istres
Home Station: Cannon AFB, N.M.



Staff Sgt. Mikel Clendenen
Position: 16th EOG Personnel,
Istres
Home Staion: McGhee-Tyson,
Tenn.



1st Lt. Steven Bury
Position: 16th EOG Interpreter,
Istres
Home Station: Robins AFB, Ga.



Staff Sgt. Christopher Joseph
Position: 16th EOG Personnel
chief, Istres
Home Station: Langley AFB, Va.



**Senior Master Sgt. Michael
Dishman**
Position: 16th EOG Civil
Engineer chief, Istres
Home Station: McGhee-Tyson,
Tenn.



Master Sgt. William Kneller
Position: 16th EOG Personal
Wireless Communications
Systems Manager, Istres
Home Station: Forbes Field, Kan.

16th AEW 'Expedition' Warriors - AEF 6 -



Senior Master Sgt. Barry Pfister
Position: 16th EOG Communications
chief, Istres
Home Station: Maxwell AFB, Gunter
Annex, Alab.



Senior Airman David Simmons
Position: 16th EOG Air
Transportation, Istres
Home Station: Little Rock AFB,
Ark.



Senior Airman Russell Love
Position: 16th EOG Security
Forces flight chief, Istres
Home Station: Bolling AFB, Md.



Senior Airman David Maland
Position: 16th EOG Security
Forces desk sergeant, Istres
Home Station: Bolling AFB, Md.



Staff Sgt. Kathy Shaw
Position: 16th EOG Fleet
Manager, Istres
Home Station: Langley AFB, Va.



TMaster Sgt. LeRoy Woodall
Position: 16th EOG Security
Forces chief, Istres
Home Station: Pentagon,
Washington D.C.



1st Lt. Justin Swartzmiller
Position: 16th EOG Logistics
chief, Istres
Home Station: Wright-Patterson
AFB, Ohio

We clear the skies

Senior leaders expand Air Force anthrax vaccine program

WASHINGTON—Air Force senior leaders recently approved expansion of the Anthrax Vaccine Immunization Program within the service, meaning more servicemembers will be asked to roll up their sleeves in the near future.

The Air Force Anthrax Vaccine Implementation Plan was distributed to commanders Oct. 11, said Maj. Linda Bonnel of the Air Force Medical Operations Agency.

"Installations are to implement the Air Force plan immediately and expand anthrax vaccination to include Priority II personnel," Bonnel said.

Priority II personnel are military members, emergency-essential Department of Defense civilians and specified contractors assigned or deployed to designated higher-threat areas for more than 15 consecutive days, Bonnel said. Priority I personnel, who recently began receiving the vaccine, include those in designated special mission units and anthrax vaccine manufacturing and DOD research personnel.

Higher-threat areas include countries primarily in Southwest Asia, the major said.

Individuals who fall within the Priority II description will be notified of their need for the anthrax vaccine, Bonnel said. The public health office at each installation will maintain a complete list of the most current higher-threat areas and will ensure troops receive all required force health protection measures prior to de-

ployment.

"The health and safety of our troops is our No. 1 concern," Bonnel said. "Vaccination offers a layer of protection — in addition to antibiotics and other measures — that is needed for certain members of the armed forces."

The Food and Drug Administration has determined that the current anthrax vaccine is safe and effective in protecting against all forms of anthrax infection, a scientific conclusion that was recently supported by the Institute of Medicine, Bonnel said.

The FDA-licensed schedule for the anthrax vaccine calls for doses at intervals of two and four weeks after the initial dose, followed by doses at the six, 12 and 18 month points, plus annual boosters. Individuals who had previously started the anthrax vaccine series will pick up with the next dose due, Bonnel said.

The AVIP was first started in 1998, primarily for those personnel assigned or deployed to Southwest Asia and Korea. Since that time, the program has undergone a number of changes. Most recently, administration of the vaccine has been restricted to a relatively small number of personnel as part of a slowdown due to production and supply issues. Since these issues have been resolved, the program is being reintroduced per recent DOD policy. For more information about the anthrax vaccine, check the official DOD Web site at <http://www.anthrax.mil>. (Courtesy AF Print News)

This holiday season, make safety personal

By Gen. Gregory S. Martin

Commander, U.S. Air Forces in Europe

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany —

As we begin our holiday season this year, I want to remind each and every one of you how valuable you are to your family, your friends, your co-workers, your unit — to our Air Force and our Nation! All of us want you to take care of yourself, and each of us stand ready to help as well. If each one of us makes safety personal, everyone will benefit.

The holidays are an important time of the year to spend with family and friends. Unfortunately, during this time of year we often forget to assess our environment. In all the excitement, it's easy to make unwise decisions — perhaps to drive too fast for the conditions, or to drive while tired or even worse, while intoxicated.

To fully enjoy this special season, each of us must incorporate the principles of risk management. Decide upon the designated driver before you leave your home, drive within posted speed limits, use a vehicle maintained and equipped for the weather and be sure you are well rested — don't overdo.

Our mission requirements have kept us all very busy throughout this past year and it doesn't look like that tempo will change anytime soon. Take advantage of this time of year to relax with family and friends and enjoy living in Europe. As you celebrate, always remain vigilant to prevent mishaps.

My family and I wish you a safe and joyous holiday season and remember - those in your life value you. If you take care of yourself for just one reason, do it for them.

One part of the Force

By Maj. Nancy F. Skinner
16th Expeditionary Support
Squadron commander

RHEIN-MAINAIRBASE, Germany - The Air Force is and always has been an evolving entity, and the team concept has never been new. Total Force is a concept that has been in action in the Air Force since its conception. But I'm not telling you anything new; what I would like to share with you is my perspective on how the Air Force Reserve helps to foster Gen John P. Jumper's (Chief of Staff of the Air Force) vision for a total expeditionary force.

Many of you know some reservists; you've even worked side-by-side with reservists on deployments. I was active duty for seven years, and no, I didn't leave

"It takes the 'total force' working together to accomplish the mission in today's expeditionary environment."



Maj. Nancy F. Skinner
16th ESS commander

because I couldn't hack it. I left active duty in 1992 when the Air Force was drawing down. In 1998, I joined the active reserves as an Individual Mobilization Augmentee. There are traditional reservists who perform one weekend a month, and a two-week annual tour per year with a specific reserve unit. These are the reservists that most military members and the public understand. An IMA is a reservist that augments and is part of an active duty unit. An IMA's commitment is one day a month and a two-week annual tour per year. It doesn't sound like a lot, but this training allows us to work side-by-side with our active duty counterparts in real world situations to gain

current hands-on training. But all IMAs must continue to train in non-active periods to keep up with all the changes. A running joke with IMAs is that IMA really stands for "I Am Alone." Everyone is familiar with the phrase, "Out of sight, out of mind." Unfortunately that can easily be the case for an IMA. More of our career requirements fall on us to manage.

IMAs must remain diligent to ensure we get scheduled and make our required training; our records are maintained properly, and we get paid when we work. But our greatest challenge is to maintain the proper balance with our active duty counter-

parts so that we blend as a team and are a valuable asset when we are required to deploy in the expeditionary environment of today's Air Force.

Many IMAs are mobilized or volunteer to fill AEF rotational deployments. In today's operational tempo, the

active duty can no longer fill all of the requirements without the Reserve and Guard component's augmentation. It takes the "total force" working together to accomplish the mission in today's expeditionary environment. The commitment of a reservist is just as strong as that of an active duty member. Our current tempo is difficult for all members of the Air Force whether you are active, guard or reserve. Bottom line is we must all understand our strengths and weaknesses as well as those of our team to maximize our strength as a team. Reservists are one part of the whole force – the Air and Space Expeditionary Force.

16th EASOG in Action



Photo by Capt. Lisa Neidinger

Staff Sgt. Brian Feldhouse, 16th Expeditionary Air Support Operations Group PERSCO NCOIC, handles a myriad of tasks for the 16th EASOG.

Staff Sgt. Brian Feldhouse

Title: PERSCO NCOIC

Location: Camp Butmir, Sarajevo, Bosnia

Home Station: Little Rock AFB, Ark.

Age: 27

Time in service: Nine years

On the mission: "I look forward to accomplishing my job as best I can. I've never been deployed to a one deep slot, so I'm doing things I've never done before. Being here I get to meet a lot of people I wouldn't normally get to meet, in a variety of jobs."

Eliminating unlawful discrimination

By Master Sgt. John Gilkey
16th AEW Military Equal
Opportunity

Over the past five years as an MEO technician, I have learned that we are afraid to talk about race issues. We have a fear of the unknown. We fear if we talk about race others may see us as racist. I guess it's a "Catch 22." The events following the tragedy of 9/11 only confirm that we need to know more about one another. Do you have an understanding of my culture? Do you have an understanding of my religion? Perceptions and racial stereotypes are powerful and can perpetuate our fears. Get the facts before you prejudice. You ask, "What can I do to eliminate unlawful discrimination?"

Communication and awareness are the keys to eliminating unlawful discrimination. People are like presents. You can't know the person inside just by looking at the outside. We live in a diverse society, one that includes people of many different races, cultures, beliefs, physical and mental characteristics. It is our individual responsibilities to be aware of those differences. Those differences are what make us unique and interesting.

Deciding to dislike people before you get to know them can lead to discrimination. Take the time to talk to someone who is not like you; a co-worker or even a neighbor. It can be as simple as asking a person their home of record. When you visit the dining facility or the AAFES food court, do you segregate yourself? Do you only sit with those that look like you? Take a chance and step out of your comfort

zone and sit down with someone that doesn't look like you. You may find you have something in common.

I have listed some strategies to help eliminate unlawful discrimination:

- You can start by knowing yourself. Take an honest evaluation of your attitudes and personal bias.
- Treat people as individuals and recognize their individual strengths.
- Avoid acting on your stereotypes and confront your prejudices.
- Be flexible and objective in your communication, by being open-minded and fair.

- Respect others rights and feelings.
- Set the standard for others to follow.
- Take action, don't allow unlawful discrimination to occur.

It has been said that, "If we don't learn from the past we are doomed to repeat it." I really don't believe that we will ever see another

holocaust or anything like the days of slavery. But we are discriminating, intentionally or unintentionally, and we can't afford to continue to plead ignorance. You don't have to be friends with everyone, but everyone deserves respect. So communicate with and become aware of the people around you.

I will close this commentary with excerpts from the Department of Defense's Human Goals Charter. "Our Nation was founded on the principle that the individual has infinite dignity and worth. The Department of Defense, which exists to keep the Nation secure and at peace, must always be guided by this principle. In all that we do, we must show respect for the serviceman, the

servicewoman, the civilian employee, and family members, recognizing their individual needs, aspirations, and capabilities. The defense of the Nation requires a well-trained volunteer force, military and civilian, regular and reserve/guard. To provide such a force, we must increase the attractiveness of a career in the Department of Defense so that service members and civilian employees will feel the highest pride in themselves, their work, their organization, and their profession. To attain these goals we must create an environment that values diversity and fosters mutual respect and cooperation among all persons regardless of race, color, religion, national origin or gender." The bottom line is to treat others as you would like to be treated, with dignity and respect.



Master Sgt. John Gilkey
16th AEW Equal
Opportunity Advisor
Area E Trailer 1
Phone: 632-4726

Frequently asked questions

Question: What AFI governs the Military Equal Opportunity process?

Answer: AFI 36-2706, Military Equal Opportunity and Treatment Program

Question: Who can utilize MEO services?

Answer: Active duty personnel, active duty family members, retirees, and AF Reserve/Guard members (while on active duty orders)

Question: Does MEO have confidentiality?

Answer: No, the MEO staff does not have confidentiality such as a chaplain. However, information is distributed on a need-to-know basis such as to the immediate chain of command. MEO staff members must inform the proper authorities of any criminal act or wrong doing.

16th EOG in Action



Photo by Capt. Lisa Neidinger

Senior Airman Adam Moye, Power Production technician, powers up a generator at Le Tube Air Base, Istres, France

Senior Airman Adam Moye

Title: Electrical Power Production apprentice

Location: Le Tube Air Base, Istres, France

Home Station: McGhee-Tyson ANG, Tenn.

Age: 20

Time in service: One year

401st EABG in Action



Photo by Capt. Lisa Neidinger

Staff Sgt. Angela Brown, 401st Expeditionary Air Base Group Services NCOIC, inventories videos that Airmen at the 401st Expeditionary Air Base Group watch during their free time.

Staff Sgt. Angela Brown

Title: Services NCOIC

Location: Eagle Base, Tuzla, Bosnia

Home Station: Dover AFB, Del.

Age: 29

Time in service: Nine years

Shipping that wine

By Master Sgt. Rose Mardula
16th AEW Legal Office

OK, so now you've purchased your requisite amount of fine Italian wine, your deployment is winding down and you want to get that wine home. First thought is to just mail it back. That's a no go. If you research the United States Postal Service site and/or the Customs site you'll soon find the shipment of wines through the mail is illegal. The resulting penalty is a fine and/or confiscation of the "goods."

Well, OK, you're thinking, then I'll just carry it home on the plane. This is certainly your best option and if you're prepared, your time at Customs will be minimal. Declare the wine to the officials and they will or may query you on your purchases – best to have the wine purchase list with the specific prices to avoid any confusion. You must report the amount in U.S. dollars and with the American dollar and Euro exchange rates that is done with relative ease. However, should you not have the price list you must report the amounts you do know and/or tell them you have no idea, which of course could result in a delay of your trip if you're unfortunate enough to encounter a Customs agent who is intent on checking each and every bottle of wine.

So Customs was a breeze – the agent was not interested in your six bottles of red wine and merely waved you through.

You're now safely ensconced at your home and contemplating, "How do I get this wine to my parents who live across the country?" The saga continues, the United States Postal Service still will not allow you to ship the wine even in a CONUS situation. Now what do you do? You could always visit those loved ones and personally present them with the precious wine. Or, you could just contact one of the wonderful wineries around our nation and make arrangements to have them ship the elixir of the goods to your loved ones in a perfectly legal manner. Granted each of the states have their own laws governing the shipment of wine from a winery, retailer, distributor etc; however the businesses have the

expertise and most recent information reference the laws governing the shipment of these types of gifts.

To make a long story short, carry the wine home, enjoy it, but don't send it through the mail. Invest in a stateside company to ship the wine of your choice (or theirs) to your loved ones and release yourself from the legal tangle which could result if you try to sidestep the law. Oh, by the way – don't drink and drive either, that's another article.

For further information reference the Direct Shipment Laws by State for Wineries, visit <http://www.wineinstitute.org>.

